

REMARKS

The above-referenced application has been reviewed in light of the Examiner's Office Action dated October 6, 2004 (hereafter "the instant Office Action"). Amendments have been made to the specification at the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 4 (under the heading "Cross Reference to Related Applications"). Claims 1-20 have been rejected by the Examiner in the Office Action. Claims 1-20 are currently pending in this application, none of which have been amended or canceled by this response. In view of the specification amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner's reconsideration of the objections and rejections is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action §2, the specification is objected to for failing to provide the U.S. application serial numbers and filing dates of the related applications cited on page 1, first paragraph of the disclosure. Applicants have amended the specification as required by the Examiner, therefore Applicants believe the Examiner's objections have been overcome and respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

In the Office Action §§3-4, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-7, 10-17, and 19-20 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,487,692 to Morelos-Zaragoza (hereafter "Morelos"). The Examiner maintains that Morelos teaches each limitation of independent claims 1, 11, and 19, including the limitation that "... *at least one of the four blocks is adapted to transmit an inactivity message to the other ones of said at least four blocks. See also column 2, line 48 - column 3, line 6.*" Applicants respectfully disagree.

The instant invention (as claimed in claim 1, 11, and 19; and described in the specification - see pages 14-18 and corresponding figures 6-8) is designed to allow for **intra-decoder messaging** between one or more of the functional blocks that comprise an error detecting and/or correcting decoder. Prior art decoders use these functional blocks to form a delivery pipeline (that is, only one codeword at a time may be processed, since there is no communication between the blocks regarding functional status), therefore the next codeword to be processed isn't begun until the processing of the previous codeword is complete. One of the benefits that may be derived from using the method and device described and claimed in the instant application and which forms the basis of the present

invention, is that intra-decoder messaging allows for more than one codeword to be processed concurrently.

In contradistinction to the present invention, there is no disclosure, teaching, or even implication contained in Morelos for intra-decoder messaging. Morelos discloses a decoder capable of correcting up to only two symbol errors (vice three or more symbol errors common for an extended RS (128,122,7) code) which Morelos identifies as an advantage since correcting up to only two symbol errors is sufficient in certain environments (specifically, Morelos indicates in a cable modem environment), resulting in comparable or near-comparable error performance.

Applicants assert that the portion of Morelos which the Examiner has identified as disclosing "intra-coder inactivity messaging" (column 2, line 48 - column 3, line 6) discloses no messaging scheme whatsoever. Applicants believe that it is possible that the Examiner has mistaken the wording in Morelos that "... the decoder 200 is capable of correcting two symbol errors in a codeword ...(column 2, lines 51-52)" for the proposition that multiple codewords may be processed concurrently by the decoder. Such an interpretation is clearly incorrect.

Morelos simply refers to the number of errors that can be corrected in a codeword, beyond which the codeword is uncorrectable. This is not to be confused with a possible advantage that the present invention provides, which is the processing of multiple codewords by the decoder concurrently. Applicants additionally wish to point out that even were Morelos to identify the ability to process multiple codewords concurrently (one *possible advantage* of the present invention), there is no teaching or suggestion that delivering such an advantage is the result of intra-decoder messaging (which is a *claimed element* of the present invention).

Furthermore, Applicant has carefully examined the figures and text of the entire Morelos reference and has discovered no disclosure or suggestion anywhere within Morelos for the use of an intra-decoder messaging scheme.

Therefore, Applicants assert that the Examiner has not constructed a *prima facie* case of anticipation for claims 1, 11, and 19; and therefore that the claims are allowable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claims 1, 11, and 19.

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Since claims 2-10 depend directly from and include each of the limitations of claim 1, Applicants submit that claims 2-10 are also allowable.

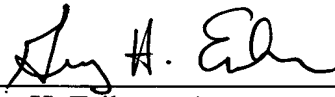
Since claims 12-18 depend directly from and include each of the limitations of claim 11, Applicants submit that claims 12-18 are also allowable.

Since claim 20 depends directly from and includes each of the limitations of claim 19, Applicants submit that claim 20 is also allowable.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's objections and rejections it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at (609) 734-6807, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

No fee is believed due. However, if a fee is due, please charge the additional fee to Deposit Account 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,
Louis Robert Litwin, Jr. et al.

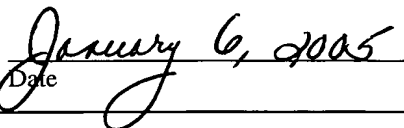

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I hereby certify that this amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on:


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Patricia M. Fedorowycz